

*Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra*  
**2020 Report to the Community**



**The BPO**  
*PLAYS ON...*

photo: Connor-Schloop



*Jo Ann Falletta, Music Director*

## Dear Friends of the BPO,

In spite of the fact that the world changed so dramatically in March that we could not even finish our 2019-20 season, we want to take a moment to reflect herein on some of the great moments before the pandemic hit, as well as our artistic response to it. As you know from previous reports, we have three goals we strive to meet each and every year:

### GROW OUR AUDIENCE

- Diverse repertoire and collaborations fueled interest and led to a new all-time record for subscription sales; our entry into the presentation of movies with live orchestra opened new doors for younger audiences; our education program continued to flourish.

### DEVELOP THE ARTISTRY

- The BPO attracted a number of talented musicians to important positions: Nikki Chooi as concertmaster, Filipe Pereira as bass trombone, Anna Shemetyeva as associate principal viola, Madeline Olson as principal harp, and violinist Xiaofan Liu; guest artists such as James Ehnes, Leonard Slatkin, and Noah Bendix-Balgley inspired intense levels of performance.

### OPERATE WITH EXCELLENCE

- The budget will once again be balanced for the 11th consecutive year; the board established a Cash Reserve Fund to augment further an improving balance sheet; the endowment managed to hold its own through turbulent markets at the \$45 million level.

### *After the season was canceled due to the pandemic, the BPO did not slow down:*

- Our musicians and education department produced more than 50 instructional instrument demonstrations for schools to use to recruit new music students!
- We partnered with others to showcase BPO musicians in unique cultural settings such as Graycliff and more recently, the Darwin Martin House.
- Our musicians created their own digital performances; and collaborated on the creation of *The Firebird* video, which continues to inspire with its message of hope and rebirth.
- We created a digital concert hall at Kleinhans and have now launched BPOonDemand, our virtual concert season!

This has been an extraordinary year with extraordinary circumstances, yet we have managed to pursue our mission against all odds. We are thankful for your support and we look forward to seeing you at Kleinhans Music Hall when that time comes! In the meantime, please review our 2020 Report to the Community and visit us on-line at [www.bpo.org](http://www.bpo.org).

Warm regards,



John Yurtchuk  
19-20 Chair



JoAnn Falletta  
Music Director



Daniel Hart  
Executive Director

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## DEVELOP THE ARTISTRY

### CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS

The legacy of the orchestra was forever altered when **JoAnn Falletta** was appointed Music Director in 1999. There is no doubt she has led the orchestra to a new level of prominence at home and abroad. Her 20th Anniversary was marked with a sparkling black-tie affair at the Hotel Henry. Co-Chaired by Michal and Jim Wadsworth and Carolyn and John Yurtchuk, the gala netted a record \$275,000 for the Annual Fund.



## REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

### A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

The whimsical tale of mischief, magic, and misplaced affection delighted audiences when we partnered with **Irish Classical Theatre Company** to recreate Shakespeare's warm-hearted comedy on the Kleinhans stage. JoAnn Falletta conducted Mendelssohn's brilliant score for three exceptional performances that produced standing ovations.



### DANNY ELFMAN'S VIOLIN CONCERTO

The dynamic and diminutive **Sandy Cameron** electrified the Kleinhans stage in a performance of iconic film composer Danny Elfman's **Concerto for Violin and Orchestra: Eleven Eleven**. Elfman's cachet opened the doors for new audiences to experience the BPO's ever-expanding repertoire.

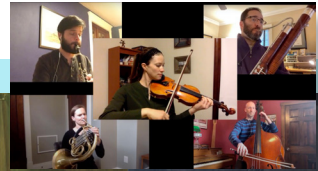


### TIME FOR THREE

Concertmaster **Nikki Chooi** joined his former **Time for Three** colleagues in an exuberant encore that brought the Buffalo Philharmonic crowd to its feet in rousing appreciation. The High Octane Classics crossover event featured the self-billed 'classically trained garage band' performing acclaimed American composer Jennifer Higdon's **Concerto 4-3**.



## GROW OUR AUDIENCE



## CONTINUING OUR MISSION

We stepped up efforts to continue to entertain and engage the community through several new initiatives during the shutdown. In collaboration with Buffalo-Toronto Public Media, we implemented a weekly radio broadcast of archived recordings, and created a limited-run *Musician Portraits* television program featuring our talented artists. We also increased content on our YouTube channel, and filmed socially-distanced, small-ensemble performances in several unique WNY locations for future digital release.



## MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION

Our musicians created meaningful connections with students through our Teaching Artists program. Classroom visits provided the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with budding performers to ask questions, view presentations, practice technique, and be inspired by the enthusiasm and encouragement of our talented musicians.



## SERVING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

In its ongoing efforts toward inclusion, equity, and diversity, members of the BPO performed at both the Gowanda and Erie County Correctional Facilities for over 100 prison inmates, and provided musical solace through performances at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center's Project Homeless Connect resource fair, connecting disenfranchised individuals with free services available throughout Western New York.



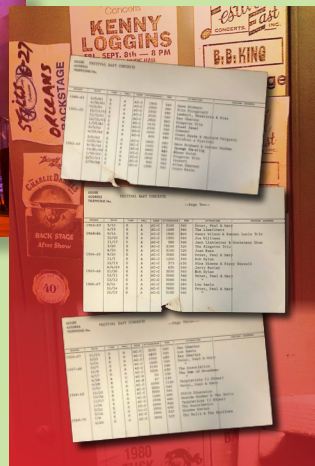
## MUSIC FOR YOUTH

The BPO's education programs continue to nurture the next generation of musicians and audience members. Weekday orchestra performances at Kleinhans Music Hall, led by **Assistant Conductor Jaman E. Dunn**, are designed specifically for school-aged children. These performances served over 53,000 Western New York students this past season.

## OPERATE WITH EXCELLENCE



### ROCK AND ROLL LEGACY



Over 50 years ago, the BPO and Kleinhans ushered in collaborations with legendary rock musicians and orchestral tributes to their iconic anthems. The season carried on the tradition of providing new experiences for fans of Queen, the Eagles, and the Grateful Dead, while the April performance of the original Jefferson Starship had to be postponed.

### CROWD-PLEASING POPS PROGRAMMING

From the aerial flyers of Cirque Fiesta to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of The Beatles' *Abbey Road* and *Yellow Submarine* albums, Principal Pops Conductor John Morris Russell set the tone for fun, frivolity, and fabulous programs. A pre-concert party highlighted Pops Goes to the Movies, and an outstanding cast of vocalists played to a full house in honoring the one-and-only Queen of Soul at **Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin**.



### MUSIC AND MOVIE MAGIC

The new film series kicked off with a performance of John Williams' score to the madcap, family-friendly 90s hit, **Home Alone**, while the movie was projected on screen above the orchestra. The inaugural enterprise attracted new audiences young and old, and was to be followed up with *Back to the Future* in Concert, which had to be rescheduled to next season.

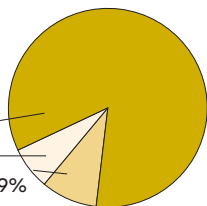


## Preliminary Year-End Budget Snapshot:

\$11 million

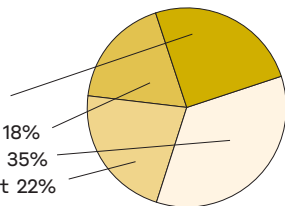
#### Expense

Orchestra, Artistic, and Programming 84%  
Fundraising 7%  
General & Administrative 9%



#### Revenue

Earned Income 25%  
Endowment Income 18%  
Contributed Income 35%  
Government Support 22%



The operating budget was balanced but declined 10% from last year to \$11 million. While the shutdown of concerts caused the loss of \$1.6 million in ticket sales and contract fees, receipt of Federal CARES ACT funding for payroll protection, combined with expense savings offset the losses, allowing musicians and staff to be paid throughout the season. Before the pandemic, subscription ticket sales reached a new all-time high of \$1.9 million. The revenue pie-chart reflects the dramatic decrease of earned revenue as a percentage of budget and the one-time increase in Government Support.



**BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA** — 786 Delaware Avenue — Buffalo, NY 14209

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Society, Inc. provides a resident professional, major symphony orchestra of artistic excellence and integrity to enrich the quality of life in Western New York through the presentation of live symphonic music and other musical events which educate and entertain the broadest possible audiences within and beyond the Western New York region.*

## MUSIC ON THE GO

One of JoAnn Falletta's most enduring achievements will be that of recording and broadcasting. We have 51 recordings, complete or in progress, spreading the BPO brand across the world through Naxos and our own Beau Fleuve label, and frequently featured on *Performance Today* radio broadcasts. Two additions were made to our CD library this season; *The Passion of Yeshua*, and *Forgotten Treasures*, a 20th anniversary gift to JoAnn from the orchestra featuring five of her favorite 'hidden gems' from Schmidt, Weiner, Martucci, Pizzetti, and Tcherepnin.

**VISIT US at [bpo.org](http://bpo.org) or CALL (716)885-0331**

*Major support provided by*



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